7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1960) 1944 FO32 Mango FO32
Ntomba

must go to the *mokolo* for their fight, this being the location of the houses belonging to the wives of the *nkumu*. The penalty for breaking this law is a fine, and if no fine were forthcoming hanging used to be the alternative. If a quarrel arises elsewhere and one party wishes to avoid fighting, he may retire to the *mogo* and thus be safe. No trees in the *mogo* may be climbed. There are, however, privileged classes exempt from all such rules, and these embrace a good many people. Thus, the mother of twins, twins, Ikewa, *mawei*, and all members of the *mokolo* and *ekopa* are exempt from the laws of the *mogo*. If any of these commit acts which are illegal for those coming under the law, they are not held guilty, but their actions will not be condoned; they will be considered breaches of good conduct, and will be dealt with informally; the parties will be quietly reprimanded, and adjured to observe the proprieties of conduct. For considers breaking the laws of the *mogo*, what corresponds to a warrant is necessary. It is necessary to catch the culprit in the act and take him before the *nkumu*. The *nkumu* himself cannot do this, nor can any of the *ekopa*; it must be done by one of the *mokolo*, and so if the *nkumu* sees someone infringing the law he will try to get one of the *mokolo* on the spot in a hurry in order to catch the offender.

In war,[1] it is the *mokoi o nkumu* who is most active in preparations, but the *nkumu* will accompany his party to battle, keeping well in the rear, and surrounded by good fighters. He does not wear his *mantale* but puts on the informal hat. If an *nkumu* were captured, he would never be tortured or killed as were other prisoners, unless he specifically sought such a fate. He could be ransomed, and his captors would beseech him to let his people ransom him, but in many cases an *nkumu* would invite death rather than endure the shame of being yielded up as a prisoner of war.

An *nkumu* is always addressed by a double clap of the hands, and will not reply to anyone rude enough to speak to him first. In answer to the clap he replies with a word of wisdom expressed in an aphorism or proverb. Such a reply, however, is common to all elders, who have their favourite aphorisms ready for any who pay them special honour. Anything the *nkumu* says must be answered not by the customary *oho kaka* (even so) which ordinary people use, but with the special word, *kinga*, which is reserved exclusively for replying to an *nkumu*, and means the same thing.

When the hour of death approaches, an *nkumu* is attended by his Ikewa. It is a rule that he must not die a natural death, and near the end, while he is still conscious and can still speak, all 'free men' clear out and leave the Ikewa pygmies to their task of tying the *nkumu* very tightly with the fibrous yam vines known as *mbokoli*. Often this severe lashing in the sitting posture, known as *ilima*, is sufficient to finish the *nkumu* off, but sometimes the work is expedited by twisting his neck.[2] Then it is announced that he is dead, *mokilwa*, this being in contradistinction to the customary phrase *nekome mokolo* used of the death of ordinary people. While the latter means

[1] Owing to the lack of tribal cohesion, warfare was not on any considerable scale. The method of warfare consisted in uniting groups of young men to fight them, the elders only joining in which one side began to get the worst of the fray. Victors and vanquished in such fights were designated 'husband' and 'wife' respectively, and members of the two groups were free to come and go in the [illegible] of the other, and even to help themselves to food. In former wars 'husband' and 'wife' were supposed to combine against their common foes.

[2] Besides *nkumu*, elderly and rich men, fathers and mothers of twins, and twins are buried in the *ilima* or sitting posture, in contradistinction to the ancient position which is the recumbent one used for ordinary people and slaves.